



**Town of Hilton Head Island**  
**TOWN COUNCIL WORKSHOP**  
Wednesday, March 10, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Present from Town Council:** John J. McCann, *Mayor*; Bill Harkins, *Mayor Pro-Tempore*; David Ames, Tamara Becker, Alex Brown, Tom Lennox, Glenn Stanford, *Council Members*

**Present from Town Staff:** Marc Orlando, *Town Manager*; Josh Gruber, *Deputy Town Manager*; Shawn Colin, *Interim Deputy Town Manager*; Angie Stone, *Interim Deputy Town Manager*; Jennifer Ray, *Interim Director of Community Development*; Jeff Buckalew, *Interim Director of Public Projects & Facilities/Chief Engineer*; Darrin Shoemaker, *Traffic Engineer*; Krista Wiedmeyer, *Town Clerk*

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**1. Call to Order**

Mayor McCann called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. By way of roll call, attendance of all members of Town Council was affirmed.

**2. FOIA Compliance:** Public notification of this meeting has been published, posted, and distributed in compliance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act and the requirements of the Town of Hilton Head Island.

**3. U.S. 278 Gateway Corridor Project Status Update**

Shawn Colin opened the Workshop by giving a timeline and quick overview of the project. Upon conclusion of his opening remarks, he introduced Craig Winn, Project Manager from the South Carolina Department of Transportation. Mr. Winn gave a presentation to the members of Town Council, reviewing the current status of the project, an overview of the community impacts and enhancements, what the next steps are and provided information on the public hearing, tentatively scheduled for May 20, 2021. He reviewed the project's *Purpose and Need*, before moving on to the status update. Mr. Winn reported that things are moving ahead as planned, and currently his team is reviewing and analyzing the alternatives, leading up to the public hearing in May. He reviewed the impacts to the community, noting that there would be no residential displacements, and two commercial displacements. Mr. Winn said that the Stoney Community has is now classified as a *Traditional Cultural Property (TCP)*. He reviewed the community engagement that took place with the residents and business owners of the Stoney Community, stating that most approved of the suggestions being posed for preserving the history of this area. Mr. Winn reviewed the suggested Stoney Community Enhancements, which included updated signage, an open-air pavilion with storyboards and information regarding the Stoney Community and the Gullah-Geechee culture. He discussed and reviewed the potential wetland and stream mitigation. Mr. Winn closed out his presentation with information regarding their engagement with the community and upcoming engagements, including a private meeting with the families in Stoney.

Mr. Harkins asked about the ingress and egress to the Crazy Crab, asking if the proposed safety road would only be for the residents or go through to the Crazy Crab. Mr. Winn said that road would not extend to the Crazy Crab, and that there would be a right turn only leaving the Crazy Crab.

Mr. Stanford asked if there would be any taking of residential properties. Mr. Winn confirmed that there would be some property taken, but no residential relocation. Mr. Stanford stated that it would be important to know how much or what would be taken from residents.

### **3. U.S. 278 Gateway Corridor Project Status Update (cont.)**

Mr. Brown stated that he felt the SCDOT has removed the verbiage regarding increasing capacity, asking what the reason for that was. Mr. Winn said the increased capacity and reduce congestion were ultimately one in the same, it means more lanes. He said that they look to different ways to reduce congestion, none of the solutions provided enough reduced congestion. Mr. Brown asked if there were studies that show the congestion. Mr. Winn affirmed. Mr. Brown said with regards to the *Guiding Principles*, could the SCDOT give some confidence that what is there today will be improved by an amount at the end of the process? Mr. Winn stated that they look at the 20 year projections of traffic, looking at the regional model through 2045. He said with the current traffic counts, the DOT developed a future volume. Mr. Brown said that he was concerned about the quality of life for both the residents of Stoney and Island-wide; asking how the proposed intersections will impede or disrupt other communities on the Island. Mr. Winn noted that the proposed intersection changes are designed to help travelers get to their location safer and quicker. Mr. Brown pointed out the increase of traffic should it be diverted down Old Wild Horse Road. Mr. Harkins stated that it was difficult to visualize the impacts at each intersection, and that it would be helpful to see traffic simulations.

### **4. Independent Engineering Review Status Update**

Mr. Colin introduced Phillip Hutcherson, Project Engineer with HDR to give an update on the oversight review and committee. Mr. Hutcherson reported that HDR has coordinated with the SCDOT and began reviewing the information they were provided. He said the review is to verify if they are meeting both Federal and State guidelines. Mr. Hutcherson said that they are reviewing the alternatives and impact matrix. He said they started with the 19 preliminary alternatives, then the 9 reasonable alternatives, and reviewing the intersection designs. He said that they have met with the Committee four times, with one left to go. Mr. Hutcherson reviewed the *Key Questions*; is the projected growth in 25 years realistic, do the reasonable alternatives accommodate growth beyond 2045, are there safer alternative designs besides adding signals and pavement, and have all the reasonable alternative been considered and fully evaluated. Mr. Hutcherson stated that the review involves; alternative analysis, growth rate, vehicle crash data, and available funding. Lastly he reviewed what additional analysis is being done; items from the oversight committee, new alternatives through Jenkins Island and Stoney area, impact to the Stoney Community, Jenkins Island, and local communities, bike and pedestrian safety, local traffic patterns, and landscaping and roadway character.

Mr. Ames asked how tourism impacts the traffic analysis. Mr. Hutcherson stated that the model used also forecasts tourism impact. Mr. Ames stated that it is unclear how the estimates are counted with the off-island growth, asking if there was anything Mr. Hutcherson could add to better explain. Mr. Hutcherson said, from what we have seen, the growth rates in the different communities show what the impact to the Island are. Mr. Ames said there is a considerable increase in beach traffic from off-Island areas, asking what the different free flow alternatives are. Mr. Hutcherson said that there was an alternative showing free flowing movements from Windmill Harbour to the Cross Island. He said that would increase the right ins and right outs. This would change the local traffic patterns dramatically. Mr. Hutcherson said that they are still looking at that alternative, and that the SCDOT has looked at a flyover alternative too.

## **5. U.S. 278 Corridor Project Land Planning Status Update**

Mr. Colin introduced Jennifer Ray to provide a status update on the Land Planning for the corridor. Ms. Ray stated that in late 2020, Council authorized staff to begin looking at Land Planners. In February, engagement was had with a number of different stakeholders. There were six local Land Planners from various firms looking at the reasonable alternatives and what the Land Planning could enhance. Ms. Ray said that the RFQ for the Lander Planning firm ends on March 8, 2021. She said the scope of work would include analyzing the land in and around the corridor and prepare land use plans for the reasonable and preferred alternatives that will suggest ways to create and sustain mixed-use and family oriented neighborhoods and opportunities for those impacted by the corridor improvement project, particularly the Stoney Community.

Mr. Stanford asked what the anticipated timeframe would be for hiring the consultant. Ms. Ray stated that staff would begin looking at the proposed timelines and update Town Council.

Council continued the discussion concerning each of the items presented to them during the meeting. All agreeing that communication is a vital part of this project, and that some conversations needed to be had right away. They also agreed that the information was a lot and needed to be considered appropriately. Mr. Stanford noting that it was his understanding that the DOT had been meeting with members of the Stoney Community and that he would ask the DOT to invite members of Town Council to also be present at those meetings. Mr. Ames stating that he understands that additional pavement would be required to accommodate left turns, but currently, there are already six lanes with already accommodate the left turns.

Mr. Orlando closed out the meeting by stating that he appreciates everyone's work on the project. He discussed what the next steps would be; hiring the Land Planner, connecting that firm with both the SCDOT and HDR. Mr. Orlando said he is too new to give a formal opinion, but that he believed there are some community solutions, and would be working on those solutions first.

## **6. Adjournment**

By unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

**Approved: April 6, 2021**

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Krista M. Wiedmeyer, Town Clerk

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John J. McCann, Mayor